

FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION
FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
FOR

STP-060-B(007)
TRACS No. 060 MA 153 H5601 01C
Maryland Avenue Overpass at 55th
Avenue and Grand Avenue (US-60)
Maricopa County, Arizona

The Federal Highway Administration has determined that this project will not have any significant impact to the human or natural environment. This Finding of No Significant Impact is based upon the attached Environmental Assessment, which has been independently evaluated by the Federal Highway Administration and determined to adequately discuss the environmental issues and impacts of the proposed project. The Environmental Assessment provides sufficient evidence and analysis for the Federal Highway Administration to determine that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required. The Federal Highway Administration takes full responsibility for the accuracy, scope, and content of the Environmental Assessment.

1-17-2007

Date

M. M. Bar
FW Division Administrator

Arizona Department of Transportation
Intermodal Transportation Division
Environmental Planning Group
205 South 17th Avenue
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Final Environmental Assessment

for

MARYLAND AVENUE OVERPASS AT 55TH AVENUE AND GRAND AVENUE (US 60)

Maricopa County, Arizona
Project No. STP-060-B(007)
TRACS No. 060 MA 153 H5601 01C

Approved by:


RICHARD M. DUARTE, Manager

On:

1-9-03

This environmental assessment has been prepared in accordance with provisions and requirements of Chapter 1, Title 23 USC, 23 CFR Part 771, relating to the implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The Draft Environmental Assessment (DEA) for this project was completed and approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on August 20, 2002. The DEA evaluated the social, economic, and environmental impacts associated with the implementation of the Maryland Avenue Overpass at 55th Avenue and Grand Avenue project proposed by the Arizona Department of Transportation (ADOT). A Public Hearing was held on September 10, 2002, at the Glendale Civic Center located at 5750 West Glenn Drive, Glendale, Arizona, to obtain comments from the public on the proposed project and on the contents of the DEA. Copies of the DEA were available for review at the Velma Teague Library, the Glendale Public Library, the Peoria Library, and the ADOT Environmental Planning Group (EPG) office. An announcement of the availability of the DEA and the time, date, and location of the Public Hearing was placed in the *Arizona Republic* on August 26, 2002, and on September 4, 2002. In addition, 19,500 doorhangers prepared in both Spanish and English text were distributed to potentially affected properties within and adjacent to the project area. Because the Public Hearing for Maryland Avenue was held concurrently with that of the 67th Avenue at Northern and Grand Avenues project site and of the 75th Avenue at Olive and Grand Avenues project site, the total number of doorhangers distributed includes the 67th Avenue and 75th Avenue project areas as well.

The 30-day agency and public comment period for the DEA began on August 26, 2002, and ended on September 25, 2002. Comments on the DEA were received via letters, on written comment sheets provided by ADOT at the Public Hearing, through e-mails, and through comments taken and transcribed by the court reporters in attendance at the hearing. The comments received are available for public review at the ADOT EPG office.

The purpose of this Final Environmental Assessment (FEA) is to respond to any comments received during the 30-day public and agency review period, to provide additional information, and to make corrections to the DEA, where necessary. This FEA should be used in conjunction with the DEA. It includes the list of mitigation measures to be included in the final design specifications, errata from the DEA, a summary of the Public Hearing with ADOT's responses to public comments, and agency letters received during the 30-day comment period. With the completion of this FEA and the issuance of a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) by FHWA, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements have been met.

II. SUMMARY OF MITIGATION MEASURES

The following mitigation measures were presented in the DEA and are listed here in their final version. These mitigation measures will be implemented by ADOT by incorporating them into the proposed project construction documents. Any changes to these measures have been completed in response to the comments made on the DEA. These mitigation measures supercede any of those identified in the DEA.

The following mitigation measures and commitments are not subject to change or modification without the prior written approval of the Federal Highway Administration.

Arizona Department of Transportation Environmental Planning Group Responsibilities

1. The results of the Phase I Site Assessment for hazardous materials will be evaluated by the Arizona Department of Transportation Environmental Planning Group and mitigated prior to construction. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 52.)

Arizona Department of Transportation Design Responsibilities

1. During final design the Arizona Department of Transportation will coordinate with the Regional Public Transportation Authority to address impacts and/or relocation of any permanently impacted bus stops or bus routes. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 29.)
2. The Arizona Department of Transportation will coordinate with the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway during development of the traffic control plan. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 30.)
3. During final design the Arizona Department of Transportation will evaluate maintaining outside shoulder widths to accommodate the future striping of bike lanes along the Maryland Avenue grade-separation structure or will evaluate an alternative location to accommodate these uses. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 32.)
4. The Arizona Department of Transportation will construct sound barriers north of Maryland Avenue between 53rd Drive and 54th Avenue. Final details of the sound barriers will be coordinated with the City of Glendale and affected property owners prior to the completion of final design. (Refer to Final Environmental Assessment page 11.)

5. The Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan will be prepared during final design. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 51.)

Arizona Department of Transportation Roadside Development Section Responsibilities

1. All embankment slopes, detention basins, and affected public right-of-way will be landscaped with drought-tolerant plants and the area covered with an inert ground cover. Trees will be planted along detention basins to screen the drainage facilities from motorists' views. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 50.)

Arizona Department of Transportation Phoenix Construction District Office Responsibilities

1. The Phoenix Construction District Office will notify local residents prior to any temporary access impacts to pedestrians or motorists. Final details of any traffic or pedestrian restrictions will be evaluated during final design. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 32.)
2. The Phoenix Construction District Office will coordinate with bus transportation representatives from the Issac E. Imes Magnet School to minimize construction-related impacts on bus access to and from the school and/or to develop alternative routes to use as necessary. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 32.)
3. The Phoenix Construction District Office will coordinate with the Maricopa County Environmental Services Department during the planning of nighttime road closures or detours during winter months for air quality purposes. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 43.)
4. Because 1 or more acres of land will be disturbed, a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit will be required. The Phoenix Construction District Office will submit the Notice of Intent and the Notice of Termination to the United States Environmental Protection Agency and copies to the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality. (Refer to Final Environmental Assessment page 11 and Draft Environmental Assessment page 51.)
5. The Phoenix Construction Office will ensure that applicable utility companies notify affected customers prior to any disruption of service. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 53.)

6. The Phoenix Construction District Office will ensure that the contractor coordinates closures of intersections with adjacent Grand Avenue construction projects so that no more than one intersection is closed at any given time. (Refer to Final Environmental Assessment page 13.)

Contractor's Responsibilities

1. No full traffic closures shall be permitted between Thanksgiving Day and January 1. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 32.)
2. Any full closures on Grand Avenue, 55th Avenue, and Maryland Avenue shall occur at night or during weekend hours. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 32.)
3. The contractor shall adhere to Maricopa County Rules 310 and 360 regarding fugitive dust emissions and new-source performance standards, respectively, during construction. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 43.)
4. The contractor shall be responsible for obtaining any necessary asbestos permits for any structures to be demolished by the contractor. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 43.)
5. In compliance with Executive Order 13112 regarding invasive species, all disturbed soils that will not be landscaped or otherwise permanently stabilized by construction shall be seeded using species native to the project vicinity. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 50.)
6. In order to prevent the introduction of invasive species, all earthmoving and hauling equipment shall be washed prior to arriving on-site to prevent the introduction of invasive species seed. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 50.)
7. Because 1 or more acres of land will be disturbed, a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit will be required. The contractor shall submit the Notice of Intent and the Notice of Termination to the United States Environmental Protection Agency and copies to the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality. (Refer to Final Environmental Assessment page 11.)

8. The contractor shall coordinate intersection closures with adjacent Grand Avenue construction projects so that no more than one intersection is closed at any given time. (Refer to Final Environmental Assessment page 13.)

Standard Specifications Included as Mitigation Measures

1. According to *Arizona Department of Transportation's Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction*, Section 107 Legal Relations and Responsibility to Public (2000 Edition) (Stored Specification 107.05 Archaeological Features), if previously unidentified cultural resources are encountered during activity related to the construction of the project, the contractor shall stop work immediately at that location and take all reasonable steps to secure the preservation of those resources and notify the Arizona Department of Transportation Engineer. The Arizona Department of Transportation Engineer will contact the Environmental Planning Group immediately and make arrangements for the proper treatment of those resources. The Arizona Department of Transportation will, in turn, notify the appropriate agency(ies) to evaluate the significance of the resource. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 40.)
2. During construction, care shall be taken to ensure that construction materials comply in accordance with *Arizona Department of Transportation's Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction* Section 104.09 (2000 Edition). Excess concrete, curing agents, formwork, loose embankment materials, and fuel shall not be disposed of within the project boundaries. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 51.)
3. According to *Arizona Department of Transportation's Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction*, Section 107 Legal Relations and Responsibility to Public (2000 Edition) (Stored Specification 107HAZMT, 01/15/93), if previously unidentified or suspected hazardous materials are encountered during construction, work shall cease at that location and the Arizona Department of Transportation Engineer shall be contacted to arrange for proper assessment, treatment, or disposal of those materials. Such locations will be investigated and proper action implemented prior to the continuation of work in that location. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 52.)
4. Excess waste material and construction debris shall be disposed of at sites supplied by the contractor in accordance with *Arizona Department of Transportation's Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction* Section 107.11, Protection and Restoration of Property and

Landscape (2000 Edition). Disposal shall be made at either municipal landfills approved under Title D of the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act, construction debris landfills approved under Article 3 of the Arizona Revised Statutes 49-241 (Aquifer Protection Permit) administered by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality, or inert landfills. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 53.)

5. During construction, the contractor shall give special attention to the effect of its operations on the landscape in accordance with *Arizona Department of Transportation's Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction*, Section 104.09 (2000 Edition) *Prevention of Landscape Defacement; Protection of Streams, Lakes and Reservoirs* and the Water Quality Standards in Title 18, Chapter 11 of the Arizona Administrative Code as administered by the Arizona Department of Environmental Quality. (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 53.)
6. Any material sources required for this project procured from outside of the project area shall be examined for environmental effects, by the contractor, prior to use, through a separate environmental analysis in accordance with *Arizona Department of Transportation's Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction*, Section 1001 Material Sources (2000 Edition) (Stored Specification 1001.2 General). (Refer to Draft Environmental Assessment page 54.)

III. ERRATA FROM THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The following pages of errata include additions or alterations to clarify, further discuss, or make text corrections to the DEA. These changes are a result of public and agency comments and are provided below with reference to their pages from the DEA. Sections of the DEA to be deleted are shown as ~~strikeout text~~ and additions to the DEA text are *italicized*.

UNIVERSAL CHANGES TO THE DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

All references to the “Preferred” Alternative are changed to “Selected” Alternative. All references to “would” in connection with the Selected Alternative are changed to “will” including the description of the alternative and associated design features and of the affected environment and environmental consequences. In addition, all references to “would” in connection with the contractor’s responsibilities are changed to “shall.”

H. Noise Analysis

Replace text on DEA pages 46–49 with the following:

Existing noise levels were modeled at nine receiver sites (R-1 through R-9) within or adjacent to the project area (refer to Table 12). Existing noise levels were modeled using traffic conditions including 30 miles per hour (mph) along 55th Avenue, 35 mph on Maryland Avenue, and 40 mph on Grand Avenue. These speeds were based on observations cited in the traffic study completed by ADOT (ADOT 2001). Additionally, because these speeds would likely increase with any improvements as a result of reduced congestion and increased capacity, traffic speeds were increased by 5 mph in the noise modeling for Alternative N-2b.

Short-term noise increases could be experienced at local residences during construction under the proposed improvements identified in Alternative N-2b. These increases are due to the typical equipment used during large construction-related projects. Additionally, without adequate data, these impacts are difficult to analyze. Site clearing may involve an approximated temporary dBA of 88 from either the operation of dozers and/or backhoes. Grading/earthwork activities that involve either graders or belly scrapers may temporarily increase noise levels to 93 dBA.

Table 12. Summary of Noise Analysis

Receiver Site	NAC	Receiver Description	Existing	No Build	Alternative N-2b	Original Mitigation
			Peak 2000 (dBA)	Peak 2025 (dBA)	Unmitigated (dBA)	
R-1	B	Single-Family (SF) Residence at 54 th Avenue	57	57	63	None
R-2	B	SF Residence at 54 th Avenue	59	59	65	Barrier B-3
R-3	B	SF Residence at 54 th Avenue	61	61	68	Barrier B-3
R-4	B	SF Residence at 53 rd Drive	58	58	64	Barrier B-2/3
R-5	B	SF Residence at 53 rd Drive	59	59	65	Barrier B-2
R-6	B	SF Residence at 53 rd Drive	61	61	67	Barrier B-2
R-7	B	SF Residence at 53 rd Drive	63	63	69	Barrier B-2
R-8	B	Cholla Apartments at 53 rd Drive	60	60	66	Barrier B-1
R-9	C	Glendale Post Office at 55 th Avenue	59	59	61	None

Alternative N-2b will impact sites R-2, R-3, R-4, R-5, R-6, R-7, and R-8 (refer to Table 12). The noise modeling for the seven impacted receivers indicates that sound barriers could be used to mitigate dBA levels. Initially, three sound barrier alternatives (B-1, B-2, and B-3) were evaluated in the noise study report (ADOT 2001). These barrier recommendations would have provided an insertion loss, which is essentially the reduction of noise levels at any given site, ranging between 4 and 6 dBA (refer to DEA pages 47 and 48).

Sound Barriers B-1, B-2, and B-3 were described in the DEA and presented to the public in the September 10, 2002, Public Hearing (refer to Section V. Public Involvement/Project Coordination C. Public Hearing and Appendix B of the FEA). Subsequent to the Public Hearing, the City of Glendale notified ADOT that it did not concur with ADOT's recommended noise mitigation in a letter dated October 11, 2002, a copy of which is in Appendix C. The City of Glendale requested that B-1 not be constructed and that the locations and configurations of B-2 and B-3 be slightly modified. Further noise analysis was conducted to determine the insertion loss achievable with the City of Glendale's proposed mitigation (refer to Table 13 and Figure 15).



Key

- Noise Receiver Location
- Potential Sound Barrier Location

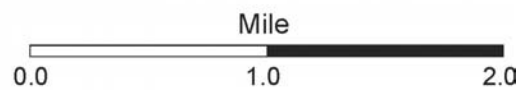


Figure 15. Noise Receivers and Potential Sound Barrier Locations

Table 13. Summary of Recommendations for Noise Mitigation.

Receiver No.	NAC	Existing Peak 2002 (dBA)	No Build Peak 2025 (dBA)	Build Alternatives (dBA)		
				Original Mitigation Peak 2025	Glendale Recommendation Peak 2025	Modified Glendale Mitigation Peak 2025
				Unmitigated/Mitigated	Unmitigated/Mitigated	Unmitigated/Mitigated
1	B	57	57	63/60	63/59	63/59
2	B	59	59	65/61	65/60	65/60
3	B	61	61	68/62	68/62	68/61
4	B	58	58	64/60	64/60	64/60
5	B	59	59	65/61	65/62	65/61
6	B	61	61	67/63	67/64	67/63
7	B	63	63	69/63	69/62	69/62
8	B	60	60	66/62	66/64	66/63
9	C	59	59	61/60	61/60	61/60

Based on the arrangement of the housing complex B-1 would benefit, the property owner (City of Glendale) requested B-1 not be constructed as part of this project. Consistent with City of Glendale zoning ordinances, B-2 would be constructed as an 8-foot-high wall located along the north side of Maryland Avenue. The City requested the wall extend from the front corner of the residence located on the northwest corner of 53rd Drive and Maryland Avenue, extend along Maryland Avenue to the rear property line, and then continue north along the rear property line adjacent to the alley. However, ADOT cannot build on private property, limiting construction to the portion of the requested 8-foot-high wall located along Maryland Avenue.

Under the proposed modification for B-3, this 8-foot-high wall will be located within the landscaped island between the planned 54th Avenue cul-de-sac and the new 54th Avenue alignment. B-3 will then continue east (within ADOT right-of-way) along the north side of the empty lot that is adjacent to Maryland Avenue and extend to the alley according to the City of Glendale's request.

Based on the revised noise analysis, the City of Glendale's noise wall configuration will alter noise levels as compared with the originally presented sound barriers. ADOT identified a new 6-foot-high wall, extending 50 feet south of the east end of B-3, parallel to the alley. This wall would result in an additional 1-dBA decrease (when compared to the City of Glendale's recommendations) at receiver sites R-3, R-5, R-6, and R-8. With the extension of B-3, noise levels at impacted receivers would be

below ADOT's 64-dBA threshold for mitigation consideration. Therefore this wall is added to the selected alternative. Final wall configurations were discussed with the affected property owner (Appendix C).

In summary, the Selected Alternative will impact seven receiver sites adjacent to the project area. Analysis indicates that sites R-1 through R-8 will experience a 6- to 7-dBA increase over the existing dBA levels (Table 13). Under the No Build Alternative in 2025, no receiver sites will meet or exceed the NAC. To mitigate for these impacts and address the City of Glendale's concerns, ADOT will construct sound barriers north of Maryland Avenue between 53rd Drive and 54th Avenue (Figure 15). Details of the sound barriers will be coordinated with the City of Glendale and affected property owners prior to the completion of final design. Although increases will occur in ambient local sound levels, these increases will be mitigated in accordance with ADOT's NAP. Therefore, the project will not substantially impact the sound levels of the project area.

K. Water Resources Considerations

(DEA page 51) Because ~~5~~ 1 or more acres of land ~~would~~ will be disturbed, a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit ~~would~~ will be required.

V. Public Involvement/Project Coordination

B. Public Involvement

(DEA page 62) ~~A public hearing will be held to provide the public the opportunity to comment on the Draft Environmental Assessment.~~

C. Public Hearing (New section inserted after Section B. Public Involvement, DEA page 62.)

The 30-day comment period for the DEA began on August 26, 2002, and ended on September 25, 2002. Copies of the DEA were available for review at the ADOT EPG office, the Velma Teague Library, the Glendale Public Library, and the Peoria Library. A Public Hearing was held on September 10, 2002, at the Glendale Civic Center, located at 5750 West Glenn Drive, Glendale, Arizona, to obtain comments from the public on the proposed project and on the contents of the DEA. An announcement of the availability of the DEA and the time, date, and location of the Public Hearing was placed in the Arizona Republic on August 26, 2002, and again on September 4, 2002.

In addition, 19,500 doorhangers prepared in both Spanish and English text were distributed to potentially affected properties within and adjacent to the project area. Because the Public Hearing for Maryland Avenue was held concurrently with that of the 67th Avenue at Northern and Grand Avenues project site and of the 75th Avenue at Olive and Grand Avenues project site, the total number of doorhangers distributed includes the 67th Avenue and 75th Avenue project areas as well.

Sixty people signed-in at the Public Hearing. Project plans were on display for the public to review. The hearing began in an open-house format followed by a brief presentation on the proposed Preferred Alternative. In addition, a description of the potential environmental impacts was summarized from the DEA. The presentation was given by ADOT EPG and project consultant representatives. Immediately following the presentation, the floor was opened for a question-and-answer session. At the conclusion of the question-and-answer session, the hearing returned to an open-house format where project representatives were available to explain the Preferred Alternative and answer questions in a one-on-one setting. A copy of the handout provided at the Public Hearing is included in the FEA Appendix A.

Comments on the DEA were received via letters, on written comment sheets provided by ADOT at the public hearing, through e-mails, and through comments taken and transcribed by the court reporters in attendance at the hearing. The comments received are available for public review at the ADOT EPG office. For public comments and responses to those comments, as expressed at the public hearing, please refer to the September 10, 2002, Public Hearing Transcript provided in the FEA Appendix B. Additional comments are grouped into three areas of concern and are summarized below with applicable responses.

Concern regarding the accuracy of ADOT's assessment of the amount of traffic on 55th Avenue, and question the necessity for improvements that may result in longer travel routes: Traffic data were analyzed as part of this project. Results were documented in the Traffic Analysis Report Grand Avenue (US 60) Maryland Avenue/55th Avenue Design Concept Report. A copy of this report is available upon request through the ADOT EPG office. Refer to Section II. Project Purpose and Need for a discussion of the need for the project.

Concern about bus transfer station coordination and coordination with RPTA to maintain or improve the bus stops in the area: Refer to Section B. Socioeconomic Resources of the DEA for a discussion of the impact of the Selected Alternative on bus service. ADOT has coordinated with RPTA and the

City of Glendale Transit Department to consider changes to transit infrastructure, but because of low ridership and future bus route uncertainty, no bus stops or bus bays will be constructed.

Grand Avenue should be redesigned as an expressway: Redesigning Grand Avenue into an expressway was evaluated in the Grand Avenue Major Investment Study. This option was eliminated from further consideration because it would less effectively address railroad crossings and cost more than development of Grand Avenue with Alternating Grade Separations. Refer to Section C. Background and Overview of the DEA for further discussion.

Four agencies responded to the DEA: the City of Glendale, the Glendale Union High School District, the Maricopa County Environmental Services Department, and RPTA (Appendix C). The City of Glendale disagreed with the recommended sound barrier mitigation as presented in the DEA; it requested that Sound Barrier B-1 not be constructed and that the locations and dimensions of sound barriers B-2 and B-3 be modified. ADOT will construct sound barriers north of Maryland Avenue between 53rd Drive and 54th Avenue. Details of the sound barriers will be coordinated with the City of Glendale and affected property owners prior to the completion of final design. The Glendale Union High School District expressed concerns regarding the sequencing of the Grand Avenue projects; overlapping construction times would impact school buses. There will be minimal road closures during construction because the alignment is offset from existing roads; additionally, the Phoenix Construction District Office will ensure that the contractor does not close more than one Grand Avenue intersection at any given time; if one intersection is closed, the others will be open.

The Maricopa County Environmental Services Department provided contact names for necessary earthmoving and waterline permits. RPTA stated that the project will not substantially impact Valley Metro transit operations in the Grand Avenue corridor and suggested several improvements to existing facilities. RPTA's comments were addressed in a letter dated October 30, 2002, and are included in FEA Appendix C. ADOT has coordinated with RPTA and the City of Glendale Transit Department to consider changes to transit infrastructure, but because of low ridership and future bus route uncertainty, no bus stops or bus bays will be constructed.

VII. Project Preparers and Contributors

Logan Simpson Design Inc.

(DEA page 61)

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